

Leesburg Standing Residential Traffic Committee Minutes of Monday, May 3, 2004

The Leesburg Standing Residential Traffic Committee met on Monday, May 3, 2004, in the Lower Level Conference Room of the Municipal Government Center, 25 West Market Street, Leesburg, Virginia. The meeting was called to order at 7:06 p.m.

Members Present

Elizabeth Whiting, Chair
Vice Mayor Mervin Jackson
Planning Commissioner Ad Barns

Ric Knight, Vice Chair
Peg Coleman
Sandy Kane
Gabe Kelemen

Town Staff Present

Calvin Grow
Mike Bomgardner
Nick Colonna
Mark McCartney

Citizens present

Craig Lane
Mike Peters

Alan Partain

Tom Finkenbinder

1. *Minutes:* On **motion** by Calvin Grow, **seconded** by Gabe Kelemen, the **minutes of the April 5, 2004 meeting were approved** with Sandy Kane and Ad Barns abstaining.
2. *Public Comment:* (a) Alan Partain, a resident at 219 North King Street addressed the Committee regarding the proposal for imposing the \$200.00 add-on penalty for speeding in a residential district authorized by Va. Code sec. 46.2-878.2 for the portion of North King Street from North Street northward to the change-over of the posted speed limit from 25 mph to 35 mph. He posed four questions: (i) Have the petition and cover letter been approved for use? Calvin Grow replied that the Town Attorney has confirmed that the Town Council is authorized to adopt the ordinance(s) designating areas in which the add-on penalty may be imposed and has made suggestions regarding the draft documents, including the preparation of a map showing the affected area and the area from which support must be drawn. Calvin Grow hopes to pull these together in the next two weeks. (ii) When will the sign soliciting public comment on the proposal be posted - before, after or concurrently with the period in which the residents will seek support by petition? Mr. Partain proposed, and the Committee concurred, that the process be concurrent. (iii) Over what period will the residents be expected to solicit the 75% support? He proposed 30 days, and the Committee concurred, since this was the recommended period of time for posting the public comment signs and keeping the two on the same timeline offered the opportunity for a valid "snapshot" of opinion. (iv) What happens next? The residents' petitions and results of the public comment signs would be returned to the Committee for a recommendation to the Town Council regarding whether or not to proceed. Ultimately, it is a Council decision whether or not to authorize imposing the fine. The Committee also recommended 30 days' posting of signs along the line set out in the traffic calming policy, saying that "INCREASED SPEEDING PENALTY OF \$200 PROPOSED FOR THIS

STREET FOR COMMENTS CALL 703-777-2420”) On **motion** by Gabe Kelemen, **seconded** by Ric Knight, the Committee **approved the petition, map and public comment sign for imposing the \$200.00 add-on penalty for speeding in a residential district on North King Street from North Street northward to the change-over from the posted speed limit from 25 mph to 35 mph, on the condition that the Committee review comments regarding the final documents, to be circulated by Calvin Grow, revealing no need for further deliberations.** The resolution was approved by all present and voting, with Vice Mayor Jackson absent for the vote. (b) Tom Finkenbinder and Mike Peters appeared in support of the all-way stop request for the intersection of Kenneth Place, S.E. and Randi Drive, S.E. They acknowledged that speeding at that location is not the primary problem, but urged the Committee to consider the risk posed by poor sight distance to young children crossing the street to load the school bus each morning. Mike Bomgardner summarized the findings of his earlier investigation: (i) speeds are well below the posted speed limit (17 and 19 mph), without regard to the higher standard (31 mph) imposed for the threshold for traffic calming measures; (ii) sight distance is adequate for the posted speed; and (iii) there has been no record of relevant accidents at the locations. Sandy Kane pointed out that the intersection will probably never meet “warrants” for all-way stops, but emphasized how limited the area of impact would be and strong support from the affected residents. The Committee acknowledged that locations where school buses load and unload can be points of hazard, but noted that these locations tend to change from year to year, where the Committee was being asked to back installation of a presumptively permanent measure. They also noted their reluctance to tie measures to the number or percentage of young children in a neighborhood, since that is a characteristic shared by many neighborhoods and also can be a characteristic that vanishes over time periods. On a **motion** by Sandy Kane, **seconded** by Ric Knight, the Committee was asked to support the petitioners. After Craig Lane pointed out that the Committee voted to support the staff recommendation in April, Chair Liz Whiting ruled that a decision to reconsider the April vote would have to be approved before Sandy’s motion would be in order and urged the Committee as a matter of comity to a Committee member and to petitioners who were not notified of the need to attend, to afford a fresh look at the matter. A **motion** to reconsider by Peg Coleman, **seconded** by Gabe Kelemen, was **approved** on the following vote: Ayes: Whiting, Coleman, Kane, Kelemen, Knight; Nays: Colonna, Grow, and McCartney; Abstentions: Jackson, Barns. After the reconsideration was approved, **motion by Sandy Kane and seconded by Rick Knight approved friendly amendments to carry over the matter to the Committee’s next meeting to allow posting the intersection for soliciting public comments on the proposal and to urge all Committee members to visit the site before the meeting.** The motion was approved by votes Aye by Barns, Coleman, Kane, Kelemen, Knight and Whiting; Nay by Colonna, Grow and McCartney, with Vice Mayor Jackson abstaining.

3. *Smart Trailer report:* Mark McCartney reported Smart Trailer results in the 1000 block for eastbound Edwards Ferry Road, N.E. (30.63 mph average, with a maximum speed of 64 mph); Potomac Station Drive, N.E. at Tolbert Elementary School (30.36 mph average, with a maximum speed of 55 mph); and westbound direction at #211 Edwards Ferry Road, N.E. (26.58 mph average, 52 maximum speed). Mark McCartney also distributed cumulative results of selective enforcement locations. Among other results, the absence of a speeding problem on Edwards Ferry Road, N.E. at Prince Street, N.E. was corroborated and an average of two summonses per hour were issued on North King Street north of North Street and south of Oakcrest Manor Drive, N.E.
4. *North King Street speed studies:* See items #2 and #3.
5. *Residential Traffic Management Plan update, etc.:* The Committee deferred this item to the next meeting.
6. *All-way stop request at Kenneth Place, S.E. and Randi Drive, S.E.:* See item #2.
7. *Removal of barricades on Washington Street, N.E., Cactoctin Circle, N.E. and Queen Street, N.E.:* Calvin Grow reported that the Committee is being asked to revisit a matter on which it earlier endorsed the position the Town Council has taken to leave the barricades in place until planned street improvements in these older neighborhoods have been constructed. Calvin Grow walked the Committee through current plans, including showing sidewalks only on Catoctin Circle, N.E. Liz Whiting reported this arises out of a request by certain Prince Street, N.E. residents for all-way stops at the intersections of Prince Street, N.E. with Edwards Ferry Road, N.E. and Prince Street, N.E. with Blue Ridge Avenue, N.E., where current “improvement” plans call for no sidewalks and residents complain that speeding motorists cause residents to dive into ditches to escape speeding traffic. No speeding problem was validated by staff studies. One underlying problem may be adopting design criteria that allow residents to eliminate all sidewalks - the logical safety zone to avoid diving into ditches, especially where speed studies show no speeding. **On motion** by Ric Knight, **seconded** by Peg Coleman, the Committee unanimously **endorsed the staff recommendation to coordinate the removal of the barricades upon completion of construction of the Northeast quadrant improvements**, now scheduled for 2005.
8. *Bus Shelters:* Mike Bomgardner reported that plans were under review and moving forward for all three shelters, with comments to be forwarded to the design engineer within the next ten (10) working days.

9. *FY '04 carry-over:* Calvin Grow and Liz Whiting noted that \$6,888.00 had been carried over from the FY '03 budget and was not likely to be earmarked for the Committee again. After the Committee reviewed two projects requesting design funds in the FY '05 budget, Calvin Grow reported that the midyear budget item for extending the fence along the Route 15 Bypass was directly affected by the recent doubling of steel prices. On **motion** by Ric Knight, **seconded** by Sandy Kane, the Committee unanimously **endorsed committing \$6,888.00 in budgeted funds toward extending the fence northward along the Route 15 Bypass and challenging the Town to make up the shortfall with savings attained in other line items to achieve this important pedestrian safety objective.**
10. *Traffic safety study on Catoctin Circle, N.E. between Edwards Ferry Road, N.E. and East Market Street:* Calvin Grow raised the first of two matters that the Town Manager asked the Committee to consider, presenting a staff report regarding traffic safety concerns on Catoctin Circle, N.E. between East Market Street and Edwards Ferry Road, N.E. The report recommends five actions based upon a traffic study conducted by Whitman, Requardt and Associates: (a) That landscaping south of the entrance into the Leesburg Plaza Shopping Center (Giant Foods) be redesigned to use plantings that will stay low to the ground with minimum maintenance. (b) That speeding enforcement be stepped up. (Ironically, Whitman, Requardt and Associates's conclusion of "excessive speeding" that is "particularly acute for northbound traffic" on the four-lane *commercial* strip--"most vehicle speeds within 5 miles per hour of the speed limit, with the median speed between 25 mph and 30 mph"--wouldn't qualify even for selective enforcement under the traffic calming plan for *residential* areas.) (c) That the all-way stop signs at Edwards Ferry Road, N.E. and Catoctin Circle, N.E. be replaced with a traffic signal and include a dedicated left-turn lane from westbound Edwards Ferry Road, N.E. onto southbound Catoctin Circle, N.E. (d) That timing of the East Market Street/Catoctin Circle traffic signal be monitored and adjusted to account for changes in traffic patterns. (e) Catoctin Circle, N.E. should be widened to a four-lane standard road from East Market Street to Edwards Ferry Road, N.E. The Committee acknowledged the Northeast quadrant sensitivity to the Edwards Ferry Road, N.E./Catoctin Circle, N.E. intersection control as one of the immediate precursors to formation of the Residential Traffic Task Force and their 2000 Report that led to formation of the Standing Residential Traffic Committee after the report was adopted by the Town Council. At Liz Whiting's request, the topic was carried over to the next Committee meeting to allow the staff to assemble more information regarding traffic projections, especially from the proposed Catoctin Circle Centre development.
11. *Proposal to extend two northbound through lanes north of Fairfax Street, S.E. on South King Street:* Calvin Grow presented Mr. Noe's second proposal, that through traffic lanes on northbound South King Street should be extended past

the intersection with Fairfax Street, N.E. It was noted that this was inconsistent with the Committee's proposal for a median to narrow the entry into the residential area. On **motion** by Peg Coleman, **seconded** by Gabe Kelemen, the Committee unanimously **recommended against the proposal to extend two northbound through lanes north of Fairfax Street, N.E.** The Committee believed that their earlier proposal for a landscaped island constructed to narrow the northbound traffic to a single lane before that point was appropriate.

12. *Calendar Conflicts:* The Committee set the next meeting for Monday, June 28th, to serve as the June/July meeting, and deferred trying to set the following meeting until then. Members who can't attend are asked to send in conflict dates beforehand so that calendars can be set.
13. *Committee member concerns:* (i) *Sandy Kane urged Committee members to attend the public meeting on May 12th regarding the School Board proposal to locate two schools on property adjacent to the Kincaid Forest subdivision and Tavistock Farms subdivision.*

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 p.m. The next meeting is Monday, June 28, 2004 at 7:00 p.m. Staff is to contact Liz Whiting if anything arises needing Committee consideration in the interim.